

# UGA Support Unit Review

## Guidelines

Updated April 2024



**Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness**

*Office of the Provost*

**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

## Contents

Support Unit Review Process and Timeline .....	2
<b>Timeline</b> .....	2
<b>Support Unit Review Procedures</b> .....	3
<b>Review Team Composition</b> .....	5
Unit Self-Study Guidelines .....	6
Review Team Report Guidelines.....	8
Substitution and Deferral Requests .....	10

## Support Unit Review Process and Timeline

As per Academic Affairs Policy 4.12-3 *Support Unit Review*, Administrative units and academic and student support units will undergo a periodic review. Such a review should be based on a thorough self-assessment by the unit under review in light of its mission, strategic goals, and success in achieving its goals. The review should consider the three components in relation to the mission and strategic priorities of the University.

The goal of support unit review is to guide the continued improvement of each unit and to inform administrators making decisions about the allocation of resources. The essential elements of each review include:

1. Identification of expected goals and outcomes of the unit's programs and services and consistency with the mission of the unit;
2. Evaluation of the key successes and challenges of the unit achieving those outcomes; and
3. Identification of strategies and actions for continuous improvement of the unit in relation to its mission, goals, and outcomes.

The procedures & guidelines for reviews are described in detail below.

### Timeline

Below is a typical timeline for a support unit review.

October 15	Unit self-study submitted to OAIE OAIE distributes to Review Team
October– January	Review Team conducts reviews ( <i>interviews, surveys, tour, etc.</i> )
January 15	Review Team draft report due to OAIE OAIE forwards draft report to unit for review
January– February	Unit Provides any revisions or clarifications to draft report to OAIE OAIE forwards revisions to Review Team for consideration
March 1	Review Team final report due to OAIE OAIE distributes final report to administrators
March–June	Follow-up meeting scheduled to discuss review
March–June the following year	1-Year follow-up report requested

## Support Unit Review Procedures

### 1. Unit Self-Study

A self-study prepared by the unit will be the basis of each review unless an exception is approved as outlined in the policy. The purpose of the self-study is to provide a mechanism for the unit to undertake a thorough self-evaluation of its unit goals and successes.

The self-study should identify expected outcomes of the unit's programs and services and describe key strengths and weaknesses of the unit in achieving those outcomes. It should include strategies for continued development of its strengths and correction of any weaknesses. In the process of preparing the self-study, the unit should evaluate its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission as defined by its internal strategic planning process in relation to its contribution to the University's mission and strategic plan.

The quality and usefulness of the self-study document is greatly enhanced by the broadest possible participation of faculty and staff within each unit. In all cases, the finished self-study should be circulated within the unit and made available to faculty and staff prior to submission for the review.

*Submission Deadline:* The self-study is due to OAIE by October 15<sup>th</sup> of the review year.

### 2. Review Team

A review team will be assembled by OAIE to review each unit, using the unit's self-study and other materials provided at the review team's request. Each review team will consist of at least three members, comprised of nominees by the unit and reporting line unit(s). The OAIE will assemble the final review team to ensure that it is balanced between administrators and faculty members to the greatest extent possible and includes at least one nominee from each group.

For more information on Review Team membership and nominations, please see page 5.

### 3. Unit Review

The review team will review the self-study document and draft a list of proposed constituent meetings and possible meeting times for the unit under review. Constituent meetings may include groups like unit faculty and staff, UGA stakeholders outside the unit, external groups or students when applicable. The review team chair will contact the unit director to schedule unit review meetings and facility tours as applicable. The unit review visit will take place between late October and early January.

Review team members will communicate with the OAIE if they choose to administer a constituent survey and will supply survey questions and design.

### 4. The Final Report of the Review Team

The review team will have eight weeks to conduct its review and submit a draft report to the OAIE. The final report will be prepared according to guidelines provided to the review team by the OAIE at the beginning of the review process (p. 8). The report should include formative recommendations meant to help the unit improve achievement of its mission and programmatic outcomes. If any unit programs should be enhanced, consolidated, or eliminated, the review team should make explicit recommendations to that effect.

OAIE will distribute the draft report to the unit and the unit will have up to two weeks to respond in writing to the OAIE with any recommended changes to the draft. The OAIE will forward the unit's response to the review team for its consideration in developing the final report.

The final report will be distributed, as appropriate, to the president, the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, the vice provost, and to all administrators with oversight of the unit and its activities.

**5. Follow-up Meeting**

A meeting will be held soon after completion of the review with the head/director of the unit, the review team, and any relevant administrators to discuss the final report. At this meeting the head/director of the unit will have the opportunity to respond to the review and address the recommendations from the review team.

**6. One-year Follow-up Report**

One year following completion of the review, the head/director of the unit will submit a written follow-up report on the unit's progress in response to the recommendations from the final report.

## **Review Team Composition**

A review team will be assembled by OAIE to review each unit. Each review team will consist of at least three members.

### **Review Team Nominations**

- In instances where the unit reports to the president through a vice president, the president, the vice president, and the unit undergoing review will each nominate three persons who are administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.
- In instances where the unit reports directly to the president and not through a vice president, the president will nominate three persons, and the unit undergoing review will nominate three persons. All nominees should be administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.
- In instances where the unit reports to the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost through a vice president, the provost will nominate three persons, the vice president will nominate three persons, and the unit being reviewed will nominate three persons. All nominees should be administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.
- In instances where the unit reports directly to the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost directly, the provost will nominate three persons, and the unit being reviewed will nominate three persons. All nominees should be administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.

The OAIE will assemble the final review team to ensure that it is balanced between administrators and faculty members to the greatest extent possible and includes at least one nominee from each group.

### **Review Team Chair**

Review team members will select the review team chair or choose to co-chair at their first meeting.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Individuals should not participate in the review of:

- a unit in which the team member holds or has formerly held a position, or
- a unit in which a spouse or relative of the team member holds a position.

## Unit Self-Study Guidelines

Below is an example template for a unit self-study. Each unit is unique, so units should focus on those sections that are most applicable to its particular mission(s). Prior to the development of the self-study, units are encouraged to communicate with their reporting vice president to ensure their self-study covers the appropriate breadth of information.

The self-study should be submitted electronically, preferably in Word or PDF, to the Office of Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness with a copy to their reporting vice president **by October 15<sup>th</sup>**.

### Self-Study Outline

1. Mission & Strategic Goals
  - a. Clearly state the mission and goals of the unit with reference as appropriate to the unit's strategic plan
  - b. Describe the relation of the unit's mission to the University's mission and University strategic goals.
  - c. As appropriate, define additional unit goals that help guide unit decision making and direction.
  - d. Describe progress in achieving defined goals.
    - i. Evaluate the unit's success in carrying out its stated mission.
    - ii. Evaluate the unit's success in achieving its defined strategic or operational goals.
    - iii. How is progress measured?
    - iv. How are results used in decision-making at the unit level?
2. Programs and Activities of the Unit
  - a. Describe the primary programs and services offered by the unit.
3. Significant Achievements
  - a. Note significant achievements of the unit, its personnel, and/or programs in the last seven years.
  - b. Describe significant awards and commendations issued to the unit or staff during the past seven years.
4. Opportunities for Improvement
  - a. Highlight any major plans or challenges foreseen for the next seven years.
  - b. Identify any key issues the unit thinks should be addressed in the review.
5. Unit Structure and Personnel
  - a. Briefly describe the administrative structure of the unit. Attach an organizational chart, if available.
  - b. List current personnel and job titles. Summarize performance expectations for each position.
  - c. Describe the main areas of strength and weakness of the staff in fulfilling the unit's mission. (This is not a request for evaluation of individual personnel but for a general assessment of each group as a whole.)
  - d. Describe any major changes in the unit's personnel during the past seven years and any changes projected for the near future (e.g., resignations or retirements).
  - e. Describe how performance is evaluated for pay raises and promotions.
  - f. Describe initiatives to improve personnel performance and programs for professional development.

*Note: Review Teams may request additional CVs or job descriptions as related to their review of the unit.*

6. Space and IT
  - a. Describe the overall space occupied by the unit and space shared with other units. As appropriate, attach floor plans.
  - b. Describe the amount and quality of office space for personnel.
  - c. Describe the adequacy of information technology and other equipment to support the unit's work.
7. Additional Information Needed for Review
8. Suggested Appendices (if applicable)
  - a. Unit's current strategic plan
  - b. Unit annual reports
  - c. Assessment reports



## Review Team Report Guidelines

Review Team reports should be responsive to the self-study and additional documentation provided by and collected from the unit during the unit review. The report should include summary descriptions and findings from the review as well as formative recommendations meant to help the unit improve the achievement of its mission and goals.

Below is an example template/outline for a Review Team report.

### Review Team Report Outline

1. Review Process Overview
  - a. Name of unit
  - b. Date of report submission
  - c. Review Team membership
  - d. Review timetable/schedule
  - e. Review procedures followed; methods of data collection
2. Executive Summary (2-page maximum)

The Review Team should provide an executive summary to act as a brief overview of the most compelling findings of the Review Team report encapsulating what the Review Team believes administrators most need to know about the unit under review. Since the report outline calls for a separate list of recommendations, there is no need to list them in the executive summary.
3. Review Team Report

The body of the Review Team's report should follow the format and order of the unit's self-study (p. 6) and should provide a summary, evaluation, and recommendations for each section that applies to the unit.

For ease of reading, it is helpful to make a brief summary of the pertinent information on which the evaluation and recommendations are based.

Questions to help guide the evaluation of each section are provided on the following page.

4. Summary of Recommendations (*provide a list*)

## Suggested Questions for Review Team Evaluation

Following are questions to help guide the Review Team's evaluation of the unit. It is not expected that every question be answered as not all questions necessarily apply to every unit.

1. Mission and Goals
  - a. Are the mission, goals, objectives, and outcomes appropriate for the unit? At a level to achieve/strive for excellence?
  - b. Does this unit adequately meet the mission and needs of the University of Georgia?
  - c. Does the unit have adequate resources to fulfill its mission?
  - d. Does the unit have clearly defined goals and/or outcomes? Does it measure the extent to which it achieves its goals?
  
2. Programs and Activities of the Unit
  - a. What are the primary programs and services offered by the unit?
  - b. Who is directly served by the unit's activities?
  - c. How does the unit interact and cooperate with other units within the University?
  
3. Significant Achievements
  - a. What significant achievements of the unit, its personnel, and/or programs in the last seven years have occurred over the last seven years?
  - b. How has the unit celebrated or publicized its achievements?
  
4. Opportunities for Improvement
  - a. What are the major challenges or opportunities that the unit will face over the next seven years?
  - b. Are there any key issues highlighted that need specific follow-up?
  
5. Unit Structure and Personnel
  - a. Does the administrative structure effectively support the unit's programs?
  - b. Are reporting lines clearly communicated to those affected?
  - c. What strategies are employed to attract and retain quality staff?
  
6. Space and IT
  - a. What is the current status of the unit's facilities?
  - b. Are the facilities adequate for the current activities? For future goals?

## Substitution and Deferral Requests

### Substitutions

Units that have external accreditations or extensive, ongoing internal assessment procedures may request to substitute these existing assessment and evaluation processes for the review method established by this policy. To be approved for substitution, the existing assessment and evaluation processes must meet the spirit of the three key components defined in the policy.

1. Identification of expected goals and outcomes of the unit's programs and services and consistency with the mission of the unit;
2. Evaluation of the key successes and challenges of the unit achieving those outcomes; and
3. Identification of strategies and actions for continuous improvement of the unit in relation to its mission, goals, and outcomes.

### Deferrals

If a unit scheduled for review would like to request a deferral, the director/head of the unit must provide a written request including a rationale for a deferred review. These requests will be routed for approval by the president, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, and/or vice president to whom the unit reports, based on reporting lines. Units granted deferral will be placed on the review cycle for the following year unless otherwise requested by the reporting unit.

### Deadlines

Formal requests for substitution or deferral must be submitted to OAIE by June 15<sup>th</sup>, prior to the review.